

FRONT OF HOUSE REPORT - 2017-18

We are very fortunate at Shuswap Theatre to have a pool of dedicated and reliable volunteers from which to get our Front of House (FOH) staff. In the past year, for 3 productions and Theatre on the Edge, from the pool of 69 volunteers, we had 29 people who gave us an estimated 421 hours of work. In addition to those, we have 5 ladies (one new one was trained in the year) who have been trained to head up the Front of House crews for our seasons' productions. Estimated time given by the FOH Heads to schedule the crews, manage the concession, and head up the crews at performances, total over 250 hours. The grand total of FOH volunteer hours was over 671 for last season.

In the fall of 2017, the Shuswap Theatre Board instituted a policy that all FOH volunteers wanting to work on a production must have taken a training course offered by the theatre within the previous 12 months. A Safety Training seminar was developed by the FOH Co-Ordinator and presented at least twice prior to each of the three productions in the 2017-18 season. The presentation was about an hour long and covered basic responsibilities of FOH staff, emergency responsibilities, the emergency evacuation plan, location and operation of fire extinguishers in the building, and procedures for medical incidents/emergencies and power outages.

Rather than scaring away our volunteers, as some feared might happen, the seminars have been well attended and very well received by the participants. To date, 36 have taken the course. A large number have said "Thank you for doing this", and a rather frightening number have followed that with a comment to the effect of "I wouldn't have known what to do.". Only one resigned from the volunteer pool, saying she thought she wouldn't be capable of fulfilling the responsibilities, but has since changed her mind, taken the course, and been reinstated.

The courses will continue to be offered prior to each production so volunteers can comply with the "every 12 months" requirement. Members of any of the theatre crews are welcome at the seminars. Since Board members are frequently in attendance at our productions, I recommend that each of them also takes the course annually so as to be a help to FOH staff in the event of an emergency.

We are always on the lookout for new FOH volunteers and are especially eager to train new volunteers to be Head of FOH crews. We welcome all Board and Shuswap Theatre Society members to join us in this valuable, but often under-rated, role.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Kingdon

Front of House Co-ordinator

September 13, 2018